

Young Students Prepare Japanese Luncheon Fare

ADELINE DALEY

Needed; A Report Card for Parents

Kimono-clad parents of students in Mrs. Virginia Huhchke's educationally handicapped class at Sepulveda Elementary School ate lunch on the classroom floor one day last week.

The occasion was an authentic Japanese luncheon prepared by the students as a climax to a social studies unit on Japan.

For the event, the classroom had been redecorated by the class into a replica of a Japanese tea room. Room dividers had been turned on

their sides to serve as floor-hugging low tables; paper fish had been hung from the ceiling; and Japanese artifacts had been placed around the room.

As the parents sat cross-legged around the foot-high tables, listening to Japanese music, students cooked tempura and sukiyaki in electric skillets. Guests ate with chopsticks and were presented with souvenir booklets made by students.

Luncheon committee chair-

men included: Greg Gates, souvenirs; Melanie Moore, decorations; John Mease, tempura preparation; Jeff LeMoine, sukiyaki preparation; Pam Rankin, tempura cooking; Todd Watkins, sukiyaki cooking; Steve Craig, rice tea and dessert; John Russell, music and displays; Susie Hachtel, kimono preparations; Donald Happs, host; Michael Mead, table arrangements; Greg Cample, sukiyaki sauce; and Mrs. Hushcke, cleanup.

Whatever happened to all of those little moppets you once saw on television exclaiming, "Mother! I'd rather do it myself!"

I'm curious. WHAT did they want to do by themselves? Other than fly to Hawaii or go on shopping expeditions without a wet-blanket parent around.

I know one thing sure—if they were representative of my kids, they were not exhorting their mother to leave them alone so that they could finish their work unassisted. Be it a household chore or a project due at school tomorrow for "extra credit," which when translated, means whether you pass the course or not.

I would prefer to be hard-hearted and refuse to give my kids any help, except that I learned that many of these same projects are put on display at "open house" for other parents to see, as well as for teachers to grade.

In fact, I'm surprised that they don't send report cards home with marks for "Introduction to Home Work for Parents" and "Intermediate Parental Assistance Program."

That's why I studiously avoided attending some of the "open houses" at school this year. I didn't want to admit helping Patrice with the blouse she made for home-making. Not with the low grade she received on it.

Of course, all of the projects were assigned some six months ago, put on a day when "my kids were absent from school." I really ought to complain to the authorities, because the teachers always insist on handing out extra-curricular projects when my kids are home sick.

Thus, what other recourse

do I have but to help them by searching the house for colored pencils (all reports seem to require colored pencils), unlined note paper, plus illustrations and information needed to fill 20 pages on "Paraguay—Then and Now." You'd be surprised how little is written in the public prints about Paraguay—then and now or ever.

I had an equally difficult time finding a picture of a crow for a report Diane was doing. In fact, I had to go through 25 back copies of the advertisement — ladden New

Yorker until I finally located one, an old crow but still suitable to illustrate her report. But on the positive side, I do learn a lot of things I never knew before. It's just a pity, however, that nobody seems much interested in hearing Paraguay was discovered by Sebastian Cabot, the explorer, not the movie star. And that its chief exports are iron and manganese. I also get a blank look when I make small talk about the habits of the American crow which lays spotted blue-green eggs.



ORIENTAL STYLE . . . Cooking tempura sauce for Japanese luncheon is Pamela Rankin, student at Sepulveda Elementary School. To climax classroom study on Japan, students of Mrs. Virginia Hushcke invited parents to an authentic Japanese luncheon. Guests wore kimonos and were seated on the floor for the occasion.

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